Chapter 8
RAPE

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Rape and sexual assault are prevalent and growing problems in our society. Each year the incidence of rape increases dramatically. In order to understand rape, what it is and why it happens, we must look beyond the myths that abound in our society and grasp the true nature of the problem. The primary fact about rape is that it is a crime of violence, not a sexual act. It is an act of aggression that is expressed sexually, in order to humiliate and degrade the victim.

As much as we would like to think that rape only happens to certain kinds of women, under certain circumstances, the fact is that we are all potential victims. We are all at risk; no matter what precautionary measures we take. This is not to say that we cannot work to lessen our risk, but that risk does not ever vanish completely. In order to strengthen ourselves as women, we must recognize the stereotypes that exist regarding rape victims and assailants. Only by acknowledging the facts and working together will we be able to eliminate sexual violence against women.

Examining Common Myths and Facts

There are many reasons for the alarming disparity between the rapes that actually occur, the ones that are reported to the police, and the number of convictions. The most important factor is the complex of socio-cultural attitudes about rape, which is too often based on myths in our society. Consider, for example, the myth that a woman cannot be raped--that she must have cooperated in some way for the act to be accomplished. This means that after a rape a woman often needs to prove her innocence--despite the fact that she is the victim of the crime.

As she faces the skepticism of others, the rape victim may start to feel guilty for having placed herself in a vulnerable situation, or for having in some way provoked the attack even though she knows on a rational level that she was forced to have intercourse against her will. Victims of other crimes are not met with labels such as "assault and battery fantasy" or "burglarization fantasy." People would not

attempt to minimize the impact of a street crime such as a brutal beating on a victim. They would neither suspect that the victim sought out an assailant nor intimate that it really was "not that bad--after all, you were not killed." But victims of rape are another matter. Many people believe that these victims are not really hurt, that they are merely forced to have sex. While it is true that some rapes are accomplished without physical injury, the terror and the feelings of absolute powerlessness are likely to leave permanent scars on the rape victim's life.

The crime of rape has long been treated as a serious offense, but because of the attitudes based largely on myths, the same system that has provided up to the death penalty for this crime has continued to make the victim suffer.

A woman stating that she has been raped is often likened to the boy crying "wolf'. She may get sympathy, but there is also the inclination to suspect that women maliciously cry rape willy-nilly as it suits them. A woman who has been raped may also be thought to be an unconscious accomplice, a loose woman, a tease or somehow to deserve it. She is subject to the rigorous and demeaning judicial process in which she must defend herself and justify her actions in the name of protecting the rights of the possibly "victimized" man. There is unquestionably great merit in a legal system that emphasizes that accusation is a very serious action. But as a result of society's mythically based attitudes, the victim of this crime is made to suffer additional victimization.

Community response to rape is a mixture of outrage and defensiveness. Rape is treated as a serious offense, which has been punished with up to the death penalty; on the other hand, a large number of men deny the contention of criminal rape by pointing to the myths surrounding women's rape fantasies, the old saw about female vindictiveness and the myth of the male sexual "point of no return," wherein the man is incapable of controlling himself once he has been sexually aroused. Also, some women try to convince their community and themselves that they are immune to sexual assault by taking the stance that only a "certain sort" of woman or foolish women are raped.

These views account for much of the cold and unsympathetic treatment of rape victims from police and hospital personnel. Juries and judges often find it hard to consider only the facts in the case when they are confronted with a victim who does not fit their idea of a "nice" woman and a man who appears to be just a "regular guy." The families and friends of the victim are under the same cultural influences as the police and the judges. Many of them will be supportive of the victim throughout, but it is not uncommon for them to waiver and wonder--at least momentarily.

Victims of Rape Fact Sheet

Violence Against Women Reaches All Time High

- **In 1988, the FBI received reports of 92,486 forcible rapes of females over age 12. The actual number of rapes occurring annually is estimated to be between 200,000 and 900,000.** (Uniform Crime Report [UCR], 1989; Koss, 1985)
- **Somewhere in America, a woman is raped every 2 minutes.** (US Justice Department of Justice 1997). **That's 30 rapes/attempted rapes in one hour; 720 in a day; 5,040 a week; 20,160 a month.** (US Department of Justice, 1997)]
- **Since 1974, the rate of assaults against women ages 20-24 has risen 48%, but assault rates against men in the same age group declined 12%.** (NCS, 1989)
- **Rapes rates have risen four times as fast as the total crime rate in the last ten years.** (UCR, 1989)
- **An estimated 15-40% of women are victims of attempted or completed rapes during their lifetimes.** Estimates vary widely due to low rape reporting rapes, different survey techniques and the fact that many victims do not define their sexual assaults as rape. (Koss, 1988; Russell, 1983)
- **A woman is 20 times more likely to be raped in the U.S. than in Japan.** The U.S. rape rate is 13 times higher than that of England, and nearly 4 times higher than that of Germany. (U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], 1990)

Few Rapists are Strangers

- An estimated 60-80% of rape or acquaintance rape. (Koss, 1988; Russell, 1990)
- In a survey of 3,187 college women, 478 reported having been raped. Of those raped, 10.6% were raped by strangers, 24.9% were raped by non-romantic acquaintances, 21% were raped by casual dates, 30% were raped by steady dates and 8.9% were raped by family members. (Koss, 1988)
- In a study of college students, 35% of men indicated some likelihood that they would commit a violent rape of women who had rebuffed an advance if they were assured of getting away with it. (Malamuth, 1986)
- An estimated 1 of every 7 married women will be raped by her husband. (Russell, 1990)

Underreporting/Delayed Reporting of Rape to Authorities is Common

- As few as 1 in 10 rapes are reported to authorities. Nearly half of all date rape victims never discuss the attack with anyone. (Koss, 1985; Warshaw, 1988)
- In a survey of college women, 38% reported sexual victimization that met the minimum legal definition of rape or attempted rape, yet only 1 out of every 25 reported their assault to the police. Victims of stranger rape were 10 times more likely to report their attack to the police than victims of acquaintance rape. (Koss, 1985)
- Campus studies among America's three largest universities suggested that 1,275 women were raped in 1989, yet only 3 of those rapes were reported to police. (Senate Judiciary Committee, 1990)
- A recent study found that only 16.3% of adolescents ages 11-17 who had been raped reported the attack while 28.6% of young adults ages 18-24 reported and 31.6% of adults over 29 years old reported.
- Records from one rape crisis center indicate that of the 40 sexual assault victims who called in July 1989, 28% of adults called within one week of an assault, and 68% waited up to 3 years to make initial contact. Of the callers who were minors, 22% called within one month of being victimized while 53% waited 6 months or more following the attack. (Anne Arundel County Sexual Assault Center, 1989)

Little Support for Victims from Medical and Legal Systems

- Police frequently either regard women's rape reports as false accusations or accuse victims of precipitating attacks. One study showed that only 53.8% of rape reports women filed were listed as rape by police in statistics sent to the FBI. (Taylor, 1987)
- In a survey of social support following sexual attack, rape victims rated the helpfulness of the resources they used. Rape crisis centers were perceived most often as helpful (94.2%), and physicians and police were described least often as helpful (55.6% and 38.2% respectively). (Godling, et al, 1989)
- In a survey of victims who did not report rape or attempted rape to police, 43% cited as their reason that nothing could be done, 12% said they were afraid of the police response, 27% said they felt it was a personal or private matter and 12% said it was not important enough. (DOJ, 1979)

Rape is the Most Repeated Crime but Convictions are Rare

- Convicted rapists are more likely to repeat their offense than convicted perpetrators of other violent crimes. (DOJ)
- In 1986, 91,460 rapes were reported to the police. In the same year, only 19, 685 individuals were convicted of rape. (DOJ, 1989)
- Although rapes accounted for 6% of the violent crimes committed in 1988, arrests for rape accounted for only 1.8% of the total number of arrests for violent crimes. Rape rates (number per 100,000 citizens) increased 5.3% in the past five years, while arrest rates for rape increased only 3%. (DOJ, 1989; NCS,1989)
- In 1986, 71% of those arrested and charged with rape in Manhattan had their cases dismissed, while the average for all felons was a 37% dismissal rate. Similarly, in Washington, DC, 50% of arrests for rape resulted in dismissals, compared with 29% of all felony arrests. (DOJ, 1986)

Recovery from Rape Takes Time

- In a recent study of 4,009 women, rape victims were twice as likely as non-victims to have had major depression (54.6% vs. 21.9%). (Kilpatrick, 1990)
- In a study comparing rape victims with non-victims, victims more often experience symptoms of fear, inability to feel and express emotions,

disturbances of self-esteem, problems with parents and other authority figures, sexual dysfunction and reduced effectiveness on the job for up to 2 years post-assault. (Kilpatrick, et all 1988; Koss and Burkhart, 1989)

- Acquaintance rape victims blame themselves more and rate themselves as less recovered than victims of stranger rape for up to 3 years after the rape. (Katz and Burt, 1986)
- When compared with non-victims, rape victims have been found to be 8.7 times more likely to have made a suicide attempt. (Kilpatrick, et al, 1985)

Male Rage: Four men talk about Rape

Rape may be America's fastest-growing violent crime; no one can be certain, because it is not clear whether more rapes are being committed or reported. It is clear that violence against women is widespread and that it fundamentally alters the meaning of life for women; that sexual violence is encouraged in a wide variety of ways in American culture and that women are very often blamed for rape.

Consider some statistics:

- In a random sample of 930 women, sociologist Diana Russell found that 44% survived either rape or attempted rape. Rape was defined as sexual intercourse physically forced upon the woman, or coerced by threat of bodily harm, or forced upon the woman when she was helpless (asleep, for example). The survey included rape and attempted rape in marriage in its calculations.

- In a September 1980 survey conducted by Cosmopolitan magazine to which more than 106,000 women anonymously responded, 24% had been raped at least once. Of those, 51% had been raped by friends, 37% by strangers, 18% by relatives and 3% by husbands. 10% of the women in the survey had been victims of incest; 75% of the women had been "bullied into making love."

What is often missed when people contemplate statistics on rape is the effect of the threat of sexual violence on women. I have asked women repeatedly, “How would your life be different if rape were suddenly to end?” (Men can learn a lot by asking this question of women to whom they are close.) The threat of rape is an assault upon the meaning of the world; it alters the human condition.

When I try to imagine what the threat of rape must do to women, I think of the stalked, adrenalated feeling I get when walking late at night in parts of certain

cities. Only, I remind myself, it is a fear different from any I have known, a fear of being raped.

It is night half the time. If the threat of rape alters the meaning of the night; it must alter the meaning and pace of the day. For some women, the threat of rape at night turns their cars into armored tanks, their solitude into isolation.

One woman said, "I know what I can't do and I've completely internalized what I can't do. I've built a viable life that basically involves never leaving my apartment at night unless I'm directly going someplace to meet somebody. It's unconsciously built into what it occurs to women to do." When one is raised without freedom, one may not recognize its absence.

"If there were no rape," said another woman, "I could dress the way I wanted and walk the way I wanted and not feel self-conscious about the responses of men. I could be friendly, to people. I wouldn't have to wish I was ugly. I wouldn't have to make myself small when I got on the bus. I wouldn't have to respond to verbal abuse from men by remaining silent. I could strike back verbally."

If a woman's basic expressiveness is inhibited, her sexuality, creativity and delight must surely be diminished.

I know a married couple who live in Manhattan. They are both artists, both acutely sensitive and responsive to the visual world. When they walk separately in the city, he has more freedom to look than she does. She must control her eye movement lest she inadvertently meet the glare of some importunate man. What, who and how she sees is restricted by the threat of rape.

To relate aesthetically to the world involves a certain playfulness, a spirit of spontaneous exploration. The tense vigilance that accompanies fear of rape inhibits that spontaneity. The world is no longer yours when you're afraid.

The following interviews with men on their feelings and experiences about the crime of rape indicate a wide range of views. Each man feels deeply about the subject and most make the important connection between aggression and feelings of powerlessness that seem to give rise to a rage in men which perpetuates rape. Perhaps just as important, these interviews not only show that men are beginning to understand how fearful rape makes women feel; they also indicate that rape makes men afraid of life, as well.

Jay - He is 23, grew up in Pittsburgh and works as a file clerk in the financial district of San Francisco.

Where I work it's probably no different from any other major city in the U. S. The women dress up in high heels, and they wear a lot of make-up and they just look really hot and really sexy; and how can somebody who has a healthy sex drive not feel lust for them? I feel lust for them, but I don't think I could find it in me to overpower

someone and rape them. But I definitely get the feeling that I'd like to rape a girl. I don't know if the actual act of rape would be satisfying, but the feeling is satisfying.

These women look good, and they kiss ass of the men in the three-piece suits that are big in the corporation, and most of them relate to me like "Who are you? Who are you even to look at?" They're snobby and they condescend to me, and I resent it. It would take me a lot longer to get to first base than it would somebody with a three-piece suit. I'm a clerk, which makes me feel like a nebbish, a nerd, like I'm not making it, like I'm a failure.

Let's say I see a woman and she looks really pretty and really clean and sexy, and she's giving off very feminine, sexy vibes. I think, "Wow, I would love to make love to her," but I know she's not really interested. It's a tease. A lot of times a woman knows that she's looking really good, and she'll use that and flaunt it, and it makes me feel like she's laughing at me, and I feel degraded.

I don't like the feeling that I'm supposed to stand there and take it and not be able to hug her or kiss her; so I just turn off my emotions. It's a feeling of humiliation, because the woman has forced me to turn off my feelings and react in a way that I really don't want to.

If I were actually desperate enough to rape somebody, it would be from wanting the person, but also it would be a very spiteful thing, just being able to say, "I have power over you and I can do anything I want with you"; because really, I feel that they have power over me just by their presence. Just the fact that they can come up to me and just melt me and make me feel like a dummy makes me want revenge. If you realize how manipulated you are, you want to take control.

Stavros - a 33-year-old psychotherapist, he has intervened in no fewer than four attempted rapes, including one on his wife.

I was sitting at home one night when I heard a scream coming from about a block away. I always keep my eyes and ears open at night and if I hear screaming I usually do something about it. I jumped up and recognized it was my wife's voice; so I ran into the kitchen, picked up a kitchen knife and ran out the door. We lived on a hill, and I ran down the hill and saw my wife turning the corner, running up the hill screaming in an obvious state of panic. As she came up she blurted out that somebody had tried to rape her, and at that point I interrupted her and brought her back to the house and went running down the street after him. To do what, I don't know. I just felt a combination of fear and rage. By the time I'd gotten down the hill, he'd taken off.

I came back to the house and calmed her down and held her and asked her what happened. She'd gotten a ride hitchhiking and the guy seemed to be O.K. She

got in the car and they took off. And when they got to the comer where our house was, she said, "Well, this is where I want to be let off," and he grabbed her around the neck and pulled her down and stepped on the accelerator, at which point she, of course, freaked out, but had enough presence of mind to reach up and pull him by the hair and kick open the door. He had to put on the brakes, at least temporarily; she ran out and hit the sidewalk, and this guy started to back up after her, at which point she screamed and I came running down.

The cops came, and she tried to describe this guy, and the way she was describing him, it was me. If I were walking down the street and the cops got his description, it would've been me, which is very striking on quite a number of levels.

For a few months afterward, Susan, my wife, was very scared of walking down onto the streets. I had another reaction, I had this tremendous sense of rage, more than I've ever felt in my life, and I kept having this image of getting this guy. I wanted to catch him and cut his balls off. It was a very primitive feeling. I know my own anger, but this was something different. For the first time in my life, I knew I had the capability of killing somebody. I think if I'd caught the guy, I would've done my best to kill him.

For about six months, I walked around like a time bomb. I felt tremendous rage. I was obsessive about it. I would sit down and try to analyze what was going on, and there were several things that came out of it. One was a strong protective feeling toward Susan, my wife. Second, not only was there a potential threat of her being violated, but also of me being violated through her. Practically speaking, the fear that she felt also lessened the amount of intimacy she was capable of having with me. I had this enormous rage, not only for the would-be rapist, but toward any man who showed aggressive tendencies toward women. And, of burse, having had psychological training, I realized that some of this had to be projection that I was looking not only at this guy, but also at the rapist inside of me. I started looking at how I needed women for something other than simple intimacy. I got more in touch with the user in me, the aggressor in me.

As a child I was taught that you never, ever get close to hurting women physically. It's your duty to be protective toward all women. Even a subtle form of aggression is frowned on. Underneath this gallant, courteous attitude toward women is a lot of anger at women because they have tremendous emotional power, especially if you're denying your own feelings and relying on women, in some sense, to teach you to feel.

The fear of impotence, of being not only needy but also helpless to fulfill that need, is the closest I can get to the source of my own sexual rage: needing to let go to a woman and at the same time feeling frustration in not being able to, and also because some women have been socialized to see that as weakness and to

exploit it.

Although I've never had rape fantasies, I've certainly felt the aggression in me when I'm fucking, as opposed to making love, particularly with women whom I perceive are not fully available to me; and what that is, of course, is a projection of me not being fully available to me. And then I find myself fucking them, trying to get deeper and deeper inside, and that comes close to a rape fantasy.

The attempted rape threw me back on a very old image of what it means to be a man, at least in Greek culture. First of all, in terms of physical capability, I became not only more protective toward Susan, but more domineering also. I don't think you can become more protective without becoming more domineering. I also became more of a father toward her. I had quite a lot of fear out on the street that I was working through when the attempted rape occurred; so I had to confront both my own and her fear, which was quite a burden.

Rape was one of the things that drove me out of New York. I was getting scared for my own survival. Either I would have to stop listening to the screams at night or I would have to get out of there.

Bill - He is a public defender whose job it is to defend people who cannot otherwise afford a lawyer. He has taken four rape cases to trial, and in each case his client was acquitted-twice to his amazement, as their guilt seemed so obvious to him. Not long after one of the trials, the woman he lives with was raped.

I don't care whether my client is guilty--I never have. The truth is irrelevant to me. You're the county; you hire me and pay me $40,000 a year to defend people to the best of my ability. That's what the bar association says I'm supposed to do.

The state in all of its power, with the police and the courts and the district attorney, is going to try to put this man in prison, and try to prove that he committed a crime. My job is to see if there is sufficient room to raise a reasonable doubt as to whether he did it or not.

In terms of rape, not every man who is charged with rape is guilty, and it's not for me to make these judgments. I n my job as a public defender, I don't get to pick and choose my clients. Most people who are accused of crimes are poor; those who wind up in the public defender's office are the poorest of the poor.

In all the rape cases I've had, the man denied that it was rape and claimed the woman consented. I don't get to see the victim for a long time, and in the course of that time I get to talk to a person-he doesn't foam at the mouth; there's not blood coming off his fingers. Politically, most of the people who commit rape are in the same socioeconomic class as most of the people who commit other crimes. There's a kind of rage that I see in rape cases that's born out of the same oppression that

makes people rob stores and violently injure people. I can see a person who in this society is so oppressed and downtrodden that rape becomes just a way of being powerful.

I've had clients who were mentally disordered, and all their crimes involved sexually assaultive behavior toward women. With one client, it moved from violence to economic crime, but it all included sexual assaults on women. He's got a bad problem. They're not going to deal with his problem in prison; that won't do any good. They're going to punish him? My opinion when I look at someone like that is that his life is punishment. Perhaps if I were a woman, of if I were raped, I'd feel differently. Women have every reason to feel enraged.

The first time I saw a D. A. question a rape victim, he appeared to be sexually excited; he was breathing heavily, and his voice was very quiet. He could have asked her if she was wearing underwear and if the rapist removed the underwear. Instead, he said, "Did you have on panties? Did he tear off your panties?" Panties, to me, is an erotic word. He looked obviously excited, and it was his witness. He was supposed to be defending her.

In two of the four rape cases I've taken to court, I was shocked that the jury found my client not guilty—I even felt slightly indignant. I thought it was obvious my client was guilty. In one trial, the woman was hitchhiking, and I think that was why the jury acquitted. She was hitchhiking; she needed a ride! She didn't say, "Hey, rape me."

In the other case, a prostitute was physically very torn up, and the jury spat on her because she was poor and a prostitute. That's the same oppression my clients get. After those cases I stopped talking to jurors about why they didn't find him guilty.

The effect of the women's movement on me has been as strong as on anyone else, but I'm no one special; I try to win my cases. I f I could get my client off by appealing to the jury's sexism, I probably would, because I'd be more concerned with this one guy and his freedom than with the ethical issue of sexism. If I didn't appeal to their sexism and I thought I could have to get my client off, and he went to prison, I probably would feel pretty bad about it.

I've always thought of rape as an ugly crime, but I've defended people who had allegedly slashed people with knives, and blinded them, and killed people; so in the sense that rape is an ugly crime, it isn't as ugly as death. The woman I live with was raped; I'm glad she wasn't killed. We had just started seeing each other. I really loved her, and this the, monkey wrench of all time; a man and a woman in a developing relationship, and the woman gets raped. I was petrified; I didn't know whether being with her during this time would make it impossible to continue seeing her on a romantic and sexual basis or not. Sex I was willing to forgo as long as it took. I felt no less of a sexual attraction, but I felt less of a sexual urge,

because I was afraid to be sexual in her presence. I was afraid I'd scare her. I didn't want sex and me to be associated with each other, because rape is sex somehow; and I didn't want to be part of it--didn't want her to see me as somehow one of them.

I wanted to disappear because I didn't know what I could do. I was very supportive and I know she knows that. I was there for five or six days and I just took care of her like she was two years old. I'm very intuitive and I felt fine about taking care of her, but a month later I didn't know what to do. She couldn't relate to me because she was too busy relating to the fact that she'd been brutalized. But since that wasn't always apparent, she just got confused. I felt brutalized in a way. I could empathize so strongly I would quake.

After she was raped, I asked to be taken off rape cases for a while. I wanted to be able to talk about my work, and it would've been difficult if I was defending rapists. I've gotten back on rape cases since then, and it hasn't been a problem.

I used to think that [with rape] it was the penetration, the violation of your privates, that made the crime so hideous; but I don't believe that now. I think the greatest horror of it is to be out of control of your life for half an hour; to not know whether you're going to come out of it alive can so rip your identity that it's hard to come out of it in one piece. For most of the women I've talked to, the sex is irrelevant. They're not there when the intercourse is taking place; they're somewhere in the back of their mind. But be out of control of your life for a period of time is another matter.

The doors get locked a lot now. My lady's afraid to come home when I'm not there. Someone once came into our house when we were gone, and she began to shake. This was two years later. I see more clearly now both the extent of the damage and wherein the damage lies.

Chuck - Regularly beaten by his stepmother and stepbrothers from the age of five, at 13 he ran away from home and began a life of drug addiction and crime. At 20, after two painful years of marriage, he separated from his wife and daughter and felt enormous rage toward women for a year. One night, while high on alcohol, pot, heroin and downers, he went into a pornographic bookstore and watched a 25-cent peep show that portrayed a man raping a woman. That night he attempted his first rape. Within ten days, he had attempted three, succeeded in one and was contemplating his fourth. He spent six and a half years in a state hospital as a mentally disordered sex offender and has been out for a year. He is 28. It is worth noting that while "Chuck" may represent a certain type for sex offender, many perhaps most, rapists have psychological profiles that differ little from the "average man."

My real mom abandoned me when I was a baby. My first stepmom had three boys; from the time I was five they used to hold me, and she used to punch me out for hours. I got beat three or four times a week by my step-mom--every time my dad was got tied up in my room for two days once. My job when I was younger was always to take care of the house. One time I didn't clean up the house; so they drug me, stripped naked, all through the living room on my back, and I got first-degree rug burns.

I couldn't eat meat fat as a kid and I refused to eat it. There was a time when my step-mom and two of her sons held me at the table and shoved a plate of fat in my face and made me lick the plate clean. I don't know why they were like that; 'cause I was the youngest I guess. I used to go to school with big welts on my back from I getting hit with a belt; I had black eyes, teeth missin'. Teachers used to see it, and the law would let it go. My step-mom walked away a lot of times from child-abuse cases. The one time I went to court as a kid, my grandmother begged the court to let her adopt me; the court said no, because my father said I got my injuries somewhere else. He didn't want to lose me.

I hated my step-mom and my stepbrothers for beating me; I hated my real mom for abandoning me; I hated my dad for never standing up for me; I hated the laws; I hated the police.

I ran away from home when I was 13, 'cause I couldn't take it no more. I just got tried of coming home and getting the shit kicked out of me. An uncle of mine who's now dead made a statement that if you back an animal into a corner; he's going to come out. At the age of 13, I started coming out, and the way I came out was violence. Every time I got into a fight with some dude or a family member, I always come out on top 'cause I learned how to street fight. I'd go for the kill.

I was into drugs at 13, dealing at 16, inter-transporting at 18. By the time I was 18, I had a $200-a-day heroin habit and had to steal a lot to support it. I was strung out for seven years. I tried every branch of the armed forces and got turned down, and that hurt. I wanted to go over to Vietnam and kill gooks and see what it felt like.

I got married when I was 18, and that was 0. K. at first; but then I found out my wife was bedding down with family members. I would get into bed with her; she'd just lay there, and I'd get pissed off and go out and get drunk. One night I came home and caught my wife in bed with my cousin. I almost beat that boy to death. I f it weren't for a black friend that was with me, I'd have killed him.

I started hating all women. I started seein' all women and the same way, as users. I couldn't express my feelings to nobody. I was just waiting to explode.

Then one night about a year after I split from my wife, I was out partyin' and drinkin' and smokin' pot. I'd shot up some heroin and done some downers and I went to a porno bookstore, put a quarter in a slot and saw this porn movie. It was

just a guy coming up from behind a girl and attacking her and raping her. That's when I started having rape fantasies. When I saw that movie, it was like somebody lit a fuse from my childhood on up. When that fuse got to the porn movie, I exploded. I just went for it, went out and raped. It was like a little voice saying, "It's all right; it's all right. Go out and rape and get your revenge; you'll never get caught. Go out and rip off some girls. It's all right; they even make movies of it." The movie was just like a big picture stand with words on it, all of it saying. "Go out and do it; everybody's doin' it."

So I just went out that night and started lookin'. I went up to this woman and grabbed her breast; then I got scared and ran. I went home and had the shakes real bad, and then I started likin' the feeling of getting even with all women.

The second one was at a college. I tried to talk to this girl, and she gave me some off-the-wall story. I chased her into a bathroom and grabbed her and told her that if she screamed, I'd kill her. I had sex with her that lasted about five minutes. When I first attacked her, I wasn't even turned on; I wanted to dominate her. When I saw her get scared and hurt, then I got turned on. I wanted her to feel like she'd been drug through the mud. I wanted her to feel a lot of pain and not enjoy none of it. The more pain she felt, the higher I felt. As I did it to her, my head was thinking back to one night where my wife just lay there like a bump on a log and didn't show any pleasure at all. It wasn't a victim no more; it was my wife.

I pulled out of her when I was about to come and I shot in her face and came all over her. It was like I pulled a gun and blew her brains out. That was my fantasy. She was the blonde that reminded me of my wife. In my head it was like poppin' caps off. I said, "Later," and just walked off and said, "Bye, Jane." That was my wife's name.

It was the most beautiful high I'd ever experienced, better than any heroin I'd ever done. I was just floatin'. I didn't even feel like I was walkin' on the ground when I was walkin' home. I felt like a parachute was on my back and I was just hangin', just floatin' in mid-air.

I stayed floatin' until the next morning, and that's when I came down and I was sick, and then I wanted to get caught. With my third victim, I ripped her clothes off, and a man saw me, and I just happened to turn around and see him and I ran home. A week later when I was out lookin' for No. 4, I got busted. I'd had a lot of thoughts of committing suicide. When cops busted me I had a gun on me and I was going to use the gun and shoot it out, so they'd blow me away.

When I got caught, a policeman called to me, and I said, "Yes, I raped them three girls." When I was rapin' I was asking for help each time I raped--help or to be killed. I didn't trust anybody. In each of my attacks I wore the same clothes and I committed them a block away from each other. During the trial, the judge kept sayin', "We can send you to the hospital or we can send you to prison." I said,

"Send me to prison. I don't care."

In the hospital I was a loner at first. I kind of enjoyed feeling safe. I was in the best group therapy the hospital had to offer. For four years they couldn't get me to talk; they couldn't get me to open up.

We lived in dorms, and after two and a half years, this guy sort of picked me out. We started talkin'. We started relatin' a lot. He showed me that everybody wasn't out to hurt me or use my feelings against me. He's the first dude I ever cried in front of. I'd been there about four years the day he got out. He turned to me that day and he started cryin', and I was cryin', and he goes, "You can't let it beat you, man; you can't fight for the rest of your life. You'll always lose."

I sat around for about two months after that tryin' to understand what he was meanin' in what he said. It comes to me: Why should I be a loser for the rest of my life? So I just started openin' up to people. I went to group one day and I said, "You know what? I've got to talk." I started makin' friends in group and started workin', started acceptin' other people's feelings, lettin' them know they could trust me.

When I went home I got harassed by the cops. They remembered me and ran drug tests and looked for track marks. They said, "We heard you was dead." I said, "No, I've just been away." I told them, "I was locked up for six and a half years and I'm not the same." They looked at me and said, "You don't seem the same anymore. "I just grew up. That's all I did: I grew up.

If anything was to cause me to go back, it would be somebody messin' with my daughter. I f anybody touches her, I will definitely hurt 'em. That kid is my No. 1 She's my pride. I seen my daughter at Christmas for the first time in almost seven years. I'm supposed to get her this summer.

Drugs, rape and child abuse are the things I hate most in life, because I've been through 'em. And I hate the law now; because since I've been out, I want to get into counseling, and they all say, "NO, you don't have a Iicense." I said, "I've got the best license in the world--I've been there." And they tell me you've gotta have a Ph.D. or umpteen years in college . . . . I'd like to work with kids. I'd like to keep kids from goin' through what I went through.

Rape is sick. It hurts because that's what I was. I'm a rapist and I can say it. And I think that's what's going to help me stay out. I can look myself in the mirror and say, "You now what? You're a rapist." My pants have got a chain and lock design on 'em. A friend asked me what that's for. I said, "It helps me remember. As long as I can remember, I ain't ever going back. When I can't remember, I'm going back." I've got my little family album with my release papers and my court transcript. I read through it once a week or so to help me remember and see what kind of a sick dog I was. It helps me want to fight. Even when I slip back, I've got ways of helpin' myself.

When I get pissed off or upset, I grab my handball and just work it out. I get to where I concentrate real hard on a picture of somebody I'm pissed at, and I just keep hitting it at that picture of the guy's face or girl's face--I keep hitting it till I can't move no more, till I'm physically and mentally drained. There's no one sending me back, not the state, not my old lady, not my family. They're not making me do another five, six or seven years. I tell 'em, I say, "Hey, you ain't worth it, and I'll be goddamned if I'm going to spend another seven or eight years playin' your game. You can get out of my life."

I got friends now that piss me off real bad. We'll be out partyin', and they'll see a girl on the street and say, "I'd like to rape her." I've gotten out of the car and told 'em, "You're a sick motherfucker!"

I get scared sometimes around women. I see a nice-lookin' lady and I get to thinkin', man, I'd like to get her in the sack; man, I get scared and I get the hell away from her. When I'm walkin' out on the street at night and a girl passes me, I get scared. I'm afraid that after she passes me someone else will grab her, and she won't see his face but she'll remember mine. I have nightmares of raping again. I'm scared of doin' it again. The girls I rape in my nightmares are always the same ones that I did rape; so it's sort of a torment. I ran into my first step-mom one time when I was 19 and I was walkin' through an alley, and she ran up and grabbed me and hugged me. I said, "If you ever touch me, I'II kill you. I'II strangle you with my bare hands!" And then I spit on her.

It's like a scar that'll never heal. I pick at it when I see her. Yet, if I see 'em and when I see 'em, I want to always remember what they done to me, so I'll never do it to my kids. I've never hit my kid. It's like the decal on my pants. It's a remembrance. There are scars that I don't want to forget.

By Timothy Beneke, Mother Jones, July, 1982

SEXUAL ASSAULT ISSUES

The crime of rape has existed since the beginning of time. "Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of pre-historic times, along with the use of fire and the first crude stone ax" (Brownmiller, Susan. Against Our Will). The imbalance of power between men and women has been perpetuated through the constant threat of physical and sexual violence against women. "It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all women in a state of fear" (Brownmiller, Against Our Will).

Over the years, violence against women has become widespread and the incidence of rape increasing drastically. The Uniform Crime Report in 1989, a total of 92,486 rapes were reported. Unfortunately, these reported rapes represent only the tip of the iceberg. It is widely accepted that rape is one of the most underreported of all major crimes. These statistics, therefore, are to greatly under reflect the actual incidence of rape in this country. The FBI also reports that rape rates have risen four times as fast as the total crime rate in the last ten years (UCR, 1989) and the actual numbers of rapes occurring annually are estimated to be between 200,000 and 900,000.

Rape is a crime of violence. It is an act of aggression that is expressed in a sexual manner, in order to humiliate and degrade the victim. All women are potential victims of rape regardless of age, race, class, physical appearance, income, or educational level. Through the battered women's and anti-rape movements, rape and sexual assault have been recognized as a product of our sexist society. In the context of this sexist society, women must work together to help end sexual violence. Rape is a crime that can change a person's life but through emotional support, advocacy, and education, the rape victim can recover and integrate the sexual assault into her life to become a survivor.

RAPE **TRAUMA** SYNDROME

Rape Trauma Syndrome (RTS) is an acute stress reaction to the threat of being killed, resulting from either a completed or attempted sexual assault. Not all the reactions encompassed by RTS are experienced by each survivor, but instead, represent a range of possible reactions. RTS reactions vary from individual to individual.

I. Acute Phase: Disorganization (1-6 months)

Lasts day to weeks, often overlaps into long-term phase

A. Immediate Impact Reactions

1. Shock/Disbelief: "Did it really happen?" "Why me?"
2. Two Styles
    - ❖ Controlled: relates details of assault in a flat voice, without showing any emotion (calm, composed, lack of affect), hidden feelings, NUMB
    - ❖ Expressed: visibly upset, anger, fear, anxiety

B. Physical Reactions

1. Shock (symptoms may include, inability to concentrate, blood pressure changes, rapid pulse, facial pallor, etc.)
2. Sleeping and/or eating pattern disturbances
3. Specific area complaints
4. Comments focus on force used during assault
5. Comments focus on sexual act
6. Disrupted sexual functioning, loss of libido
7. Difficulty in concentrating

C. Medical Issues

1. Physical injury
2. Sexually Transmitted Diseases, including AIDS
3. Pregnancy

D. Emotional Reaction

1. FEAR: of retaliation, of meeting the attacker, of being alone, of community stigma, of having been threatened with death, mutilation, injury
2. Helplessness and loss of control
3. Repression, denial
    - ❖ Minimize assault, (e.g. assault results in slight or no physical injury: "He didn't really hurt me")
    - ❖ No expression of anger

4. Feelings of shame, self-blame, guilt, humiliation, embarrassment
    - ❖ May have been forced to say affectionate things to rapist
5. Degradation
    - ❖ Forced into sexual ads not within usual, consensual relationships
    - ❖ Probably will not tell you everything
6. Anger, revenge, retaliation
    - ❖ May feel guilty about feeling angry
    - ❖ Inability to cope with own rage and hostility
7. Irritation
    - ❖ Irritated with people first few weeks
    - ❖ Mood swings, over-reactive
8. Depression, ranging from moderate to severe
9. Loss of self-esteem, altered self-concept
10. Anxiety
    - ❖ Immediate fear of safety (Security check from local police crime prevention unit may reduce anxiety)
    - ❖ Fatigue (lack of sleep or depression?)
    - ❖ Difficulty in concentrating

E. Thoughts

1. Tries to block memories
2. How to un-do what happened "If only I had ..."
3. Thoughts of assault often occur daily
4. Able to cope with experience, understands range of feelings are due to post-assault

II. Denial Phase (1-3 months)*

A. Discussions Avoided

1. Own anger not expressed

B. Thoughts A voided

1. Attempts to forget assault, views assault as event of the past
2. Daily thoughts of the assault cease

III. Long-Term Process: Reorganization (6-12 months)*

A. Lifestyle Changes

1. *Physical lifestyle--possibly more health problems*
2. *Psychological lifestyle*
    - ❖ *Dreams and Nightmares*
      Similar to rape
    - ❖ *Subsequent mastery*

Flashbacks, intrusive imagery

- *Fear of: Crowds Being Alone Sleeping Similar Locations People in general or specific people/groups*
- *Loss of self-esteem*

3. Social lifestyle-trade freedom for security
    - Upsets normal routine
    - Level of functioning
    - Avoids leaving home
    - Dropping out of school/absent from work
    - Frequent visits with family or avoidance of family
    - Move, change job or phone
    - Strong need to get away/change of scenery
    - Family conflicts
    - Violation of trust issues, lack or loss of support from significant others
    - Loss of privacy
    - Angry at losing freedom

IV. Integration/ Recovery (Follows Reorganization)

- Feeling safe again and in control
- Ability to trust
- Freedom from fear
- Blame placed on assailant
- Perceives self as normal
- Expresses and resolves anger

Factors Aiding Recovery

- Family/significant other support
- Positive self-esteem
- Support from systems--police, medical, court

Factors Delaying Recovery

- Prior sexual assault/abuse
- Negative self-esteem
- Poor social support
- Simultaneous problems

*Family
*Financial
*Academic

- Recurring Problems-(Alcoholism)
- Point of Life Cycle
  *Developmental crisis
  *Prior sexual experience
- Style of attack – blitz/acquaintance
- Additional symptoms
  *Increased physical ailments (psychosomatic)
  *Depression
  *Increased drug/alcohol abuse
  *Suicidal behavior
  *Psychotic behavior

***Time frames are assuming the victim has the opportunity to discuss her/his emotions shortly after the assault, receives appropriate support, and prior life issues do not compound recovery. Without support, it is not uncommon for several years, sometimes as many as 10 or 20 years, to pass before the victim is able to integrate the assault.**

V. Compound Reaction

A. Elements Prior to Assault

1. Prior sexual assault/abuse
2. Psychiatric condition
3. Behavioral problems
4. Physical problems

B. Elements after the Assault

1. Need for more than crisis intervention
2. Possible recurrence of previously behaviors (e.g. recovered alcoholic resumes drinking, recovered bulimic resumes binge/purge eating, etc.)

VI. SILENT REACTION

A. Reported to no one

B. Feelings and reactions ignored

FEELINGS FREQUENTLY REPORTED BY RAPE VICTIMS

Rape is sexual contact without consent gained by force or the threat of force. Rape is a humiliating physical and psychological attack; its effects can be shattering. The first call for help from a rape victim may be the most important. It can be hard for the victim to make that call. Given the fabric of myths unfavorable to the victim that society has created around rape, we can understand that the victim will be frightened to hear herself say to another person that she has been raped. At a workshop on rape, a rape victim told us that rape victims place a lot of responsibility on the person they call for help. Therefore, when a rape victim calls you or comes in to see you, it is important to help her immediately as much as you can in practical concrete ways, and to create a feeling of mutual trust, security and competence so she will feel comfortable about calling you or your group again if she needs you.

To help you assume this responsibility we have listed below common Feelings and potential problems that rape victims and anyone to whom a rape victim turns for help, friend or stranger, should be aware of. This section was originally written for people who would be staffing a rape crisis line. However, the information contained here will be useful for anyone, professional or friend, to whom a rape victim turns for help.

Fear of people, Sense of Vulnerability

The rape victim frequently finds that she fears people and that she feels vulnerable as she goes about the regular activities of her life. She may keep her curtains drawn night and day; she may jump at certain sounds; she may glance behind her, she may not go outside at all. She may be particularly attuned to sexual innuendoes, stray looks, pats, pinches, feels, etc. which she realizes, due to her heightened awareness, are all around her, but which she used to take in stride. Now they terrorize her. It may reassure her to know that these feelings are experienced by many rape victims and that they often remain long after the rape. She should try to be with friends and build up her self-confidence again. This process is particularly difficult for the victim when her attacker was someone she had trusted. In this case, not only her faith in others but her faith and trust in her own judgment has been undermined by the rape. She will need time and support to regain a realistic trust in herself in relation to others.

Loss of Control Over Her Own Life

The rapist has forced her to submit to something she did not want to do. Possibly, she harbored some ideas before the rape that rape couldn't happen to her, that she would be able to resist or that she could take care of herself. Since the rapist overcame her resistance by force or fear, she no longer feels sure of anything about herself and her self-determination. Sometimes even little decisions like whether to have a cigarette or whether to eat become momentous things. The victim practically has to repossess herself after the rapist took possession by force. She has to reassert the value of doing things for herself, has to insist to herself that she is worthwhile and that she still has willpower and control over herself.

A related aspect of fear of people and loss of control enter when the victim has followed a life style of trusting people, leaving doors open, talking to strangers, making friends in odd places, hitchhiking across country, and so on. She may feel that in addition to her body, the rapist has stolen her whole way of life. How can she return to her former freedom and trust when rape has happened to her? Hopefully, this frustration can develop into a combination of realistic alertness, constructive anger and action to combat rape and its consequences.

Fear of The Rapist

He did it, the rapist overcame the victim's resistance and forced her to submit to his sexual demands. She has been robbed of self-volition and made helpless. She has faced the might he not try again? The need to preserve ourselves from bodily harm or even tried to kill him, as some victims have said they would do, she may be killed herself.

Fear of attack under these circumstances is a normal human fear. She is not crazy or paranoid to fear the attacker. She may also fear people who remind her of the attacker. This is not crazy either. The pain of the experience, mental and physical, is still fresh in her mind. She needs positive assurance from those around her that life is worth living and she needs to explore alternative ways of coping with her fear of attack. She should be given calm, step by step instructions on what to do if the attacker does show up. Talk about the attacker. If she knew him, does she think he'll come back? If so, encourage her to plan accordingly. I f he was a stranger, does he possibly know her name, address, or phone number? Suggest that she alert her employer not to give any information about her to anyone. She could seek police protection by reporting the rapes. The more she calmly talks about the rapist, the clearer she will be about her plan for action if he should return. She may

decide to get a protective dog, to take training in self-defense, to develop a warning or "help" signal with a friend or neighbor; she may memorize the police emergency phone number or have it written on the phone, etc. Whatever she decides, her plan should be clear in her own mind and simple to put into operation even when she is emotionally upset.

Talking About Her Rape vs. Risks of Telling

Talk to the victim about telling her friends or other people. She may feel compelled to tell everyone she sees, or she may feel she has to hide the rape from everyone. She may find it difficult to articulate out loud, even to herself, the fact that she has been raped, let alone to share this fact with another individual. She is taking a risk by telling people about the rape since some people will not be supportive. She may not be ready to stand up to their fears, doubts, or real or implied accusations, especially if they are friends or if they know the rapist and tend to protect him. She needs to see the dangers of being frank to everyone and to evaluate each situation as it arises before telling someone. Nevertheless, supportive friends and relatives are invaluable to the victim in dealing with the rape. Some rape victims never call any rape crisis line, perhaps because they have people to talk to who will support them for as long and as intimately as they need to be.

Concern For the Rapist

Many victims have expressed concern about what will happen to the rapist if he is reported to the police. Some victims want psychiatric help for the rapist rather than jail. Perhaps these attitudes are the result of the victim's effort to understand what happened and what her contributions were to the assault. If no physical beating or other violence occurred, some victims even say that is not worth sending a man to jail. It is human to show concern for another human, especially one in trouble. But she must not let this feeling obscure the fact that he did attack her. In feeling sorry for him she should not repress her anger for the indignities she has suffered just as most robbery victims wouldn't think of forgiving and forgetting someone who robbed them.

Anxiety, Shaking, Nightmares

Victims often react after physical attack with shaking and anxiety. The relief of having made it, the shuddering at the thought of how close to death she was are expressed in this way. The victim remembers the incident. The trauma goes so deep that she may have nightmares. She thinks what she could have done and she thinks what he could have done. Continued support from all around her and reassurance that she is physically safe and can do things to protect herself will help these symptoms of trauma dissipate. The nightmares will continue, perhaps, but will not be as vivid.

The next five symptoms or reactions--guilt, why me? shame, embarrassment, and stupidity--are treated together because together they represent a tendency which numerous social and psychological studies have documented. Women are taught that they are especially responsible for sexual contacts which go 'too far', and women's feelings about that forced contact frequently reflect the feelings they have been taught to have about other sexual events. I f women are caught in this line of thinking, they perceive rape as just such a contact which got out of hand, rather than as an
aggressive act.

Guilt

Many women tell us they feel guilty about the rape. They may fear that they 'asked for it' or provoked it by their actions. They may feel they did not resist enough. Horrible as it was, they may also feel that because we often hear that women really enjoy being raped, somehow they did. They may feel guilty for looking nice, for giving the rapist an opportunity. Where do these feelings come from? These feelings are the results of society's myths and misconceptions about sexuality and rape. These myths say that men cannot control themselves. They say that women who go out alone at night or who hitchhike are "asking to be raped". If the victim spoke to the attacker once, she may feel she was at fault. These feelings are the direct result of knowing what society thinks and worrying what society will think of her now. Positive, unwavering support and calm objective talk about the absurdity of these destructive myths can help her see that she is not the one who should feel guilty. Ask her this: Why should anyone feel guilty for being the victim of an attack?

Wondering - Why Me?

Some women wonder why the rapist chose them. What is it about them that separated them from other women? These feelings arise from the common mistaken belief that rape happens to women who 'ask for it,' or who in some other way made themselves noticeable. These beliefs are wrong; anyone can be raped. To help the victim see this, try to get her to tell you how she came in contact with the rapist and what contacts she had with the rapist before the rape occurred. The rapist probably already knew where he could rape someone without interference and waited until a woman happened into that spot. It might have been a room he knew was empty or a dark corner or deserted parking lot. He may have maneuvered the situation to get someone there. In short, she should be reminded that the rapist made the decision to
assault her.

Shame

The destruction of self-respect, the deliberate efforts by the attacker to make her do things he knows she and society detest, to make her feel dirty and disgusting, may make her ashamed. That she submitted at all, even if at knifepoint, may make her feel ashamed. Society's attitudes toward sex and different sexual acts are all reflected in her shame. The victim who feels she has been violated 'needs not feel shame where no choice was involved.

Embarrassment

There can be two kinds of embarrassment. She may be embarrassed to discuss the physical details of the assault. Our bodies have always been regarded as private and her privacy has been stripped from her by another. Telling anyone at all may be painful. The other kind of embarrassment is one we have all felt at times. It can be embarrassing to admit that such a thing could happen to us at all.

A victim's conversation with you should be private and serious. She needs to feel confident talking to you and feel right about her choice of whether or not to tell anyone else. If she wants to tell anyone else, she needs to feel safe in talking to you about further revealing her story and should receive any help she feels is necessary to make further revelations. There are many reasons given for not telling parents, or police, for instance, but try to help her if she decides to try.

Stupidity

The extent of her mistake that led to the point of rape determines how really stupid she feels. If she was hitchhiking, for instance, she may blame herself for the rape because she knew it would be risky. It is good to admit an error and to try to be more cautious in the future, but an admission of error must not hide the fact that she was attacked. She was not the attacker. No person asks or deserves to be raped no matter how thoughtless or careless they were.

Anger

This is the most appropriate attitude. When someone burglarizes our homes or runs into our cars we are angry. The victim has been attacked and humiliated, so she should be angry. She can press charges. She can tell other women about the attacker or the situation he created leading up to the attack.

In Summary

The victim needs calm, reassuring, unwavering support. She needs to know that she is not crazy. She needs help to restore her dignity and self-respect. She need not feel ashamed or guilty. She needs to see the total rape experience for what it was, an attack on her whole being. The rape cannot be allowed to become a dominant factor in her life. Such an assault is terrifying experience that she must incorporate into her life, and then continue living as a stronger woman. It would be damaging to repress the experience or to negate her own part in it, however small.

It is difficult for a victim to call a stranger and say: "I was raped!" Consequently, the beginnings of a conversation with a victim are very important. Be calm, supportive. Explore with her reasons why she may be feeling any feelings she describes to you. It is not important for you to know all the details of her assault. You only need to know those details that can help her sort out her feelings and put the rape into proper perspective. A good start is often to see if she has seen a doctor. There are practical details she can talk about until she's ready to talk about her feelings. Is she reporting to the police? Is she afraid he will come back? Always give her the feeling you believe her, that you understand her situation and that you are firm in your own feelings about rape. She may not want to talk deeply with you, but she may want to listen to tell her how other victims have felt. Your concern for her as a person and your knowledge and confidence in your beliefs will go a long way. Remember that she may not know how she feels and what she

wants. It is up to you to help her explore what she is really feeling.

Be prepared to talk as long as she needs you. Be sure to tell her she may call anytime or at what times she may call. Tell her your name and give her your phone number. Try to be sure she has a friend or relative whom she trusts since she may need them.

RIGHTS OF RAPE VICTIMS

Every victim of sexual assault should have the right

- ✓ to be treated with dignity and respect by institutional and legal personnel
- ✓ to have as much credibility as a victim of any other crime
- ✓ to be considered a victim of rape when any unwanted act of sex is forced on her/him through any type of coercion, violent or otherwise
- ✓ to be asked only those questions that are relevant to a court case or medical treatment
- ✓ to report or not report the rape to the police
- ✓ to receive medical and mental health services whether or not the rape is reported to the police, and at no cost
- ✓ to receive medical and mental health treatment, or participate in legal procedures only after giving her/his consent (information should include all possible options)
- ✓ to be treated in a manner which does not usurp control from the victim, but which enables her/him to determine her/his needs and how to meet them.
- ✓ to not be exposed to prejudice against race, age, class, lifestyle, or occupation
- ✓ to have access to support persons, such as advocates, outside of the institutions
- ✓ to have access to peer counseling
- ✓ to be provided with information about her/his rights
- ✓ to have the best possible collection of evidence for court
- ✓ to not be asked questions about prior sexual experience
- ✓ to have common reactions to rape, such as sleeplessness, nightmares, hostility towards men, anxiety, fear, etc., not to be considered pathological behavior

- ✓ to have access to a secure living situation, or other measures which might help to allay fears of future assault
- ✓ to be assured strict confidentiality
- ✓ to be considered a victim of rape regardless of the assailant's relationship to the victim, such as the victim's spouse
- ✓ to have deterred her/his assailant by any means necessary. No victim should be criminally prosecuted for harming the assailant during or within a reasonable period of time after the rape; or for harming the assailant in the process of preventing an attempted rape
- ✓ to receive medical treatment without parental consent if she/he is a minor
- ✓ to have access to supportive legal advice
- ✓ to have a preliminary hearing in each case when an arrest has been made
- ✓ to have the case prosecuted by criminal justice personnel who support the victim, if the case goes to court
- ✓ to be advised of the possibility of a civil suit

Rape Crisis Center, Washington, D.C., 1976